

ANNUAL REPORT OF FEDERAL
LABOR RELATIONS AUTHORITY,
FISCAL YEAR 1997—MESSAGE
FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE
UNITED STATES

The Speaker pro tempore (Mr. STEARNS) laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, without objection, referred to the Committee on Government Reform:

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with section 701 of the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978 (Public Law 95-454; 5 U.S.C. 7104(e)), I am pleased to transmit the Nineteenth Annual Report of the Federal Labor Relations Authority for Fiscal Year 1997.

The report includes information on the cases heard and decisions rendered by the Federal Labor Relations Authority, the General Counsel of the Authority, and the Federal Service Impasses Panel.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON,

THE WHITE HOUSE, March 2, 1999.

RESIGNATION AS MEMBER OF
COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following resignation as a member of the Committee on Science:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,

Washington, DC, February 23, 1999.

Hon. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker, The Capitol, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER, on Feb. 12, 1999, I was appointed by the House Democratic Caucus to serve on the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. According to Rule 19 E of the Rules of the Democratic Caucus, "no Democratic Member of the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence may serve on more than one standing committee during the Member's term of service on the select committee."

Rule 19 E also states that "Members shall be entitled to take leaves of absence from service on any committee (or subcommittee thereof) during the period they serve on the select committee and seniority rights on such committee (and on each subcommittee) to which they were assigned at the time shall be fully protected as if they had continued to serve during the period of leave of absence."

Accordingly, I am requesting a leave of absence from the House Committee on Science for the 106th Congress, with the understanding that my seniority rights on the Committee will be fully protected in accordance with Rule 19 E of the Democratic Caucus. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

TIM ROEMER,
Member of Congress.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the resignation is accepted.

There was no objection.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER
PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. STEARNS). Pursuant to the provisions

of clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair announces that he will postpone further proceedings today on each motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Such rollcall votes, if postponed, will be taken after debate has concluded on all motions to suspend the rules.

PERMITTING CERTAIN YOUTH TO
PERFORM CERTAIN WORK WITH
WOOD PRODUCTS

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 221) to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to permit certain youth to perform certain work with wood products, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 221

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. EXEMPTION.

Section 13(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 213(c)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(7)(A) Subject to subparagraph (B), in the administration and enforcement of the child labor provisions of this Act, it shall not be considered oppressive child labor for an individual who—

"(i) is at least 14 but under the age of 18, and

"(ii) is a member of a religious sect or division thereof whose established teachings do not permit formal education beyond the eighth grade,

to be employed inside or outside places of business where machinery is used to process wood products.

"(B) The employment of an individual under subparagraph (A) shall be permitted—

"(i) if the individual is supervised by an adult relative of the individual or is supervised by an adult member of the same religious sect or division as the individual;

"(ii) if the individual does not operate or assist in the operation of power-driven woodworking machines;

"(iii) if the individual is protected from wood particles or other flying debris within the workplace by a barrier appropriate to the potential hazard of such wood particles or flying debris or by maintaining a sufficient distance from machinery in operation; and

"(iv) if the individual is required to use personal protective equipment to prevent exposure to excessive levels of noise and saw dust."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GOODLING) and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GOODLING).

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 221, which is a bipartisan bill introduced by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PITTS) and the gentleman from California (Mr. MARTINEZ). The bill will address a unique problem resulting from the application of the child labor provisions of the Fair

Labor Standards Act to individuals in the Amish community.

We are considering a substitute amendment which makes one technical change for the purpose of renumbering the paragraphs in the bill.

My colleagues will remember that the House passed a similar bill, exactly the same, as a matter of fact, last year by voice vote under suspension of the rules. The Senate did not consider the bill prior to the close of the last Congress, and so we are taking early action on the bill in order to allow ample time for the Senate to act.

Children in the Amish community complete their formal classroom education at age 14 or 15. In fact, the Amish faith teaches that their children's formal classroom education should end after the eighth grade, after which they, quote, learn by doing, while working under the supervision of their parents or another community member.

Amish youth have traditionally worked in agriculture on their family farms. However, economic pressures in recent years, including the rising cost of land, have forced more and more Amish families to enter other occupations. Many have gone into operating sawmills and other types of woodworking. So, increasingly, the opportunities for Amish young people to "learn by doing" are in these types of workplaces.

The problem is that the Department of Labor's regulations prohibit 14- and 15-year-olds from working in any sawmill or woodworking shop and severely limit the work of 16- or 17-year-olds in these workplaces.

The Department has undertaken a number of enforcement actions against Amish employers in recent years. As a result, Amish youth no longer have the opportunity to learn skills and work habits through the community's traditional means.

We have no reason to believe that Amish young people will be placed at risk or allowed to engage in unsafe activities in the workplace. As some of my colleagues have said, who would care more about the well-being of Amish children than their parents? The fact is that, as the Amish struggle to preserve their way of life, the Department of Labor's actions are, in effect, undermining the Amish culture.

H.R. 221 is a narrow bill that addresses this specific problem. It would allow individuals who are at least 14 years old to work in sawmills and woodworking shops, so long as they do so under the supervision of an adult relative or member of the same faith. The young person would not be permitted, under any circumstances, to operate or assist in the operation of any power-driven woodworking machines.

The young person must be protected from wood particles or other flying debris by a barrier or by maintaining an appropriate physical distance from machinery in operation. In addition, the young person must be protected from